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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 YEREVAN 002022

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN
DEFENSE FOR OSD EURASIA AMER LATIF AND DSCA DIANE LAMB
USMISSION OSCE FOR KIT TRAUB

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2015

TAGS: [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [MASS](#) [AM](#) [IN](#) [PK](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: ARMENIA: LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN RELIEF
EFFORT DISAPPOINTING

REF: A) STATE 196411 B) YEREVAN 1911 C) YEREVAN 1885
D) YEREVAN 1811

Classified By: CDA A.F. Godfrey for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) On multiple occasions since October 21, Armenian Defense and Foreign Affairs officials have not responded to our calls for military and other assistance -- which we think they are capable of rendering -- to the Pakistan relief effort. Early promises to answer requests for assistance (refrels) have faded into ambivalent denials of responsibility, likely tied to a GOAM perception that assistance to Pakistan is not in Armenia's self-interest. As a result, Armenia has missed an opportunity to contribute to international relief efforts and departed, at least in this case, from the commitment GOAM leaders say they have made to increasing Armenian military interaction with the West and Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO. We appreciate the GOAM's generous assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and we will continue to encourage our Armenian interlocutors to extend that generosity to other international relief efforts. End Summary.

STRIKE 1: MFA STILL "DISCUSSING" ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN

12. (C) On October 21 (ref A) and again on October 27 (ref B), Ministry of Foreign Affairs NATO Section Head Hrach Tashchyan told us the GOAM would be willing "to work through the NATO Response Force to render assistance" to Pakistan, but that he could not comment on specific, concrete steps Armenia might take, including operational assistance for MI-17 helicopters, until the GOAM had a better idea about NATO's operational requirements. On November 2 and again on November 9, Marta Ayvazyan, who replaced Tashchyan as MFA NATO Section Head, told us the MFA was still "discussing a response." On November 11 and on November 16, Ayvazyan told us she would contact us "if there is anything new on the subject."

STRIKE 2: PARTS IN INVENTORY, JUST NOT "AVAILABLE"

13. (C) On October 27 and November 2, Deputy Minister of Defense General-Lieutenant Artur Aghabekyan told us the Armenian military had compatible hardware and maintenance crews he could deliver to assist Pakistani MI-17 helicopter operations, but that the decision to engage in the relief effort could only come from "political leaders," with whom Aghabekyan told us he would follow-up. (Note: In his initial response to refrel demarche, Aghabekyan told us that Armenia does not/not have MI-17 helicopters but failed to acknowledge that spares from its MI-8 inventory should be compatible. End Note).

STRIKE 3: DON'T CALL US, WE'LL CALL YOU

14. (C) On November 2, we passed a copy of the NATO-produced MI-17 combined parts list, which details specific helicopter parts the Pakistan relief effort critically needs, to Aghabekyan. Aghabekyan told us he would review the list and work with Armenia's political leadership "to determine what we might be able to do." On November 17, however, General-Major Mikael Melkonyan, the Head of the Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation Department who, despite working closely with Aghabekyan, told us he had never heard of our requests for Pakistan relief operation assistance.

COMMENT: MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

15. (C) Whether a political or military decision, the GOAM's failure to coordinate a substantial response to our request

for assistance in the Pakistan relief effort falls well short of Armenian generosity in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. This is disappointing. Aghabekyan, who consistently appears to be more forward looking than many of his defense establishment peers, has both the political cache and the military authority to produce at least a symbolic, if not substantial, GOAM contribution. His failure to do so, and the MFA's apparent refusal to pursue alternative assistance measures, is a departure from the enthusiasm the government has recently indicated for increased Armenian interaction and interoperability with the West and Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO (ref D).

GODFREY